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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR SEPTEMBER 17, 2006

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for September 17, 2006. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

OZGUR GUNDEM / EVRENSEL: The dailies reported that more than 10,000 people held a silent demonstration in Diyarbakir yesterday (09/16) against the bombing that killed ten people last week. During the demonstration, however, some people spontaneously broke the silence by shouting slogans such as "The murder state will pay for what it has done," "Erdogan is a murderer," and "May the hands that disturb peace be broken." DTP officials intermittently warned the crowd to remain silent during the demonstration.

HURRIYET / ZAMAN / OZGUR GUNDEM / EVRENSEL / CUMHURIYET / RADIKAL: Hurriyet and Zaman dailies reported that 4,000 or 5,000 people attended the silent demonstration in Diyarbakir. In addition to the public, thirty-two political parties and NGOs were represented at the Kosuyolu Park where the bombing took place. Another group, comprised of the mayors and chairmen of political parties, gathered at the municipal guesthouse and walked hand-in-hand towards the Kosuyolu Park. People wore black and white ribbons, with black symbolizing mourning and white symbolizing peace. Sezgin Tanrikulu, chairperson of the Diyarbakir Bar Association, spoke on behalf of the NGOs and called for a cease-fire in the region. Tanrikulu, who condemned the bomb attack during his speech, announced the end of the province-wide three day mourning period and made a further call for local tradesmen to reopen their businesses (see press summary for September 15). Tanrikulu demanded that the bombing's perpetrators be found quickly. A 20-car convoy of the special operation teams of the Diyarbakir police made "a show of force" ahead of the demonstration by touring the Ofis quarter of the province. Meanwhile, Ozgur Gundem daily reported that tradesmen in some districts of Diyarbakir, such as Bismil, Silvan, Dicle and Ergani, kept their shops closed as a sign of protest against the bombing.

BOLGE / MILLIYET / RADIKAL: Nearly 150 DTP members held a silent demonstration in Mersin to protest the September 12 Diyarbakir bombing. DTP members set off from the party building and marched towards Mersin Municipality, carrying a large black cloth symbolizing public mourning. Nearly 150 people in Sanliurfa and 25 people in Adana held silent demonstrations as well.

CUMHURİYET / HURRIYET / MILLİYET: A commissioned officer and a village guard working on a temporary basis were killed in a military operation carried out in Van's Ercis district on Friday (09/15). Six terrorists were killed during the operation. Four kilograms of C-4 explosives, nine hand grenades and four Kalashnikov guns were found with the terrorists. The terrorists were preparing for an unspecified hostile operation. Land Forces Commander General Ilker Basbug, who attended the ceremony at Van Jandarma Army Corps Command held for the two security members killed in Van, made a strongly worded speech, extended condolences to the families of the soldiers, and stated that the fight against terrorism would endure in the cities and in the countryside until the last terrorist had been killed. Basbug said that the operation in Van had become a milestone in the history of homeland security.

HURRIYET / RADIKAL / MILLİYET: Four terrorists were detained in Mugla's Milas district. Thirteen kilograms of A-4 and C-4 explosives were found with the detainees. Meanwhile, a hazardous device of ten kilograms of A-4 explosives and ammonium nitrate was safely deactivated in Mardin's Nusaybin district. The device's construction was reportedly similar to that of the bomb used in the Diyarbakir bombing.

RADIKAL / MILLİYET: An article by Lenore G. Martin that appeared in the Washington Post stated that the PKK constituted a threat against preservation of stability in the Middle East.

HURRIYET: Joost Lagendijk, EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Commission's Co-Chairman, said that the Diyarbakir bombing cast a shadow over the DTP's call for cease-fire. Lagendijk said that whether the perpetrators were radical nationalists or PKK members, the goal was definitely to negate the recent moderation efforts initiated by the Kurdish people. Lagendijk extended support for the unilateral cease-fire call issued by the DTP on

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September 11th.

OZGUR GUNDEM: The daily claimed that seven soldiers died in PKK attacks in Sirnak's Gabar Mountain and in the region of Gundike Mele. The daily cited PKK sources as stating that the recent attacks were in retaliation for the bomb attack carried out in Diyarbakir.

HURRIYET (CUKUROVA): Nearly 1,000 people convened at the CHP party building in Adana yesterday (09/16) under leadership of Bulent Ozulku, former CHP candidate who ran for mayor in March 28, 2004 local elections. (Note: The Adana CHP party's leadership had previously attempted to dismiss Ozulku from the party on grounds that Ozulku was taking a separate direction away from the party mainstream, in a way incongruous with the party discipline. CHP Ankara headquarters recently overturned Ozulku's dismissal.) Ozulku made a press announcement at the terrace of the building. Rather than encouraging the crowd to call for the CHP administration's resignation, Ozulku asked them to chant "(Deniz) Baykal for premiership, CHP for power." Ozulku criticized the party chairman and his administration, and blamed them for not keeping pace with the national party leader.

BOLGE: A crop duster crashed in Adana, causing no casualties except for the pilot, who was injured in the crash. The plane crashed reportedly due to an engine failure. The 57-year old pilot was taken to Numune Hospital for treatment. (This summary is from September 16 edition.)

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